

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ESTR TECH CH FR US

SUBJ: PROSPECTIVE FRENCH NUCLEAR REACTOR SALE TO CHINA

REF: A. PARIS 20298, B. STATE 163371

1. FRENCH AMBASSADOR HAS MADE A PRESENTATION TO ME LIKE THAT IN REFS AND ASKED FOR USG SUPPORT FOR THE SALE OF THE FRAMATOME NUCLEAR REACTOR TO THE PRC. ARNAUD DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT THE FRENCH INTEND TO ASK THE CHINESE ONLY FOR A UNILATERAL STATEMENT ON NON-MILITARY USE. AN AGREEMENT IS MUCH MORE SATISFACTORY, AND I PRESUME REFS ARE AUTHORITATIVE ON THIS POINT.

2. THE PRC HAS PUT A HIGH PRIORITY ON A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, WHICH IS ONE OF THE ITEMS MENTIONED IN HUA KUO-FENG'S REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE GOVERNMENT TO THE NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS IN FEBRUARY. WE CONSIDER ACQUISITION OF SUCH A PLANT TO BE A HARD PRC TARGET. THE "PRAGMATISTS" WHO FORMULATED THE TEN-YEAR PLAN KNOW THAT THEY HAVE NO CHANCE OF PRODUCING IT THEMSELVES BEFORE 1985 AND UNDOUBTEDLY ARE COUNTING ON IMPORTING IT.

3. BOTH THE MILITARY ASPECTS OF ANY PARTICULAR REACTOR
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AND THE EFFECT OF APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL IN OUR RELATIONS WITH THE FRENCH ARE BEYOND OUR PURVIEW. AT THE SAME TIME, THERE ARE GOOD CHINA POLICY REASONS FOR APPROVING THE SALE, WHICH THE CHINESE UNDOUBTEDLY RECOGNIZE REQUIRES USG CONCURRENCE. OUR APPROVAL WOULD SHOW THE CHINESE THAT THE US IS SUPPORTING A KEY ELEMENT IN THEIR MODERNIZATION PROGRAM AT AN

IMPORTANT PERIOD IN SINO-AMERICAN RELATIONS.
WOODCOCK

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NNN

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